

FOR: FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL DISTRIBUTION

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL - VOLUME V

TRANSMITTAL #50

This transmittal implements many provisions of federal regulations finalized on November 21, 2000. Many of these regulations are already in practice in Virginia as we implemented the provisions as required by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Significant changes in this transmittal are:

- the elimination of the second interview if the applicant misses the first one;
- the elimination of the practice of shortening certification period for unclear household circumstances;
- the allowance of lengthening certification periods;
- changes in the vehicle policy;
- flexibility in the definition of categorical eligibility; and
- a change in the sponsored immigrant policy that allows for deductions from the sponsor's income and resources.

The provisions of this transmittal are effective June 1, 2001 for all applications filed on or after June 1, 2001, and for pending applications as of June 1, 2001. For the sponsored immigrant policy change, ADAPT will not reflect the policy changes at this time. To accommodate the change, the eligibility worker must calculate the income and resources of the sponsor and spouse outside the ADAPT system and enter the calculated amounts in ADAPT. Workers may reproduce the work-sheet attached to this transmittal letter.

This transmittal introduces a new form, Request for Verification form, (032-03-???). A copy of this form will be in the online forms drawer on the support page at www.localagency.dss.state.va.us. An initial supply of the form will be sent to each agency when the printed version becomes available.

Remove Page(s)	Insert Page(s)	Significant Changes
Definitions Pages 3-4	Definitions Pages 3-4	The public assistance definition is revised. As long as one person in the food stamp household receives cash or a service through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant or state funding for the block grant, the case is a public assistance case.
Part I Page I	Part I Page I	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 1-3	Pages 1-3	The benefit issuance section is revised to include information about Electronic Benefits Transfer. The personnel chapter adds information for local agency operations to accommodate needs of special client populations.
Page 8	Page 8-9	A chapter about the prudent person concept is added. This chapter implores workers to make reasonable judgements.
Part II Pages i-ii	Part II Pages i-ii	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 1-8	Page 1-8	Applicants may file applications by mail, in person, through a representative and now to the extent the local agency can receive it, by fax or electronically. The section provides for applicants to avoid supplying information about “nonapplicants.” The interview chapter eliminates the requirement for agencies to schedule another interview appointment if the applicant misses the first interview. Households must now contact the agency to reschedule if they miss the interview.

Remove Page(s)	Insert Page(s)	Significant Changes
Pages 11-	Pages 11-	<p>The provisions for categorical eligibility and joint processing reflect the change in the public assistance case definition. Households in which all members receive Supplemental Security Income or General Relief benefits may have joint processing and are categorically eligible. Not all the members have to receive the TANF benefits to qualify for joint processing or categorical eligibility.</p> <p>Clarifications are added regarding authorized representatives.</p>
Part III Pages 1-4	Part III Pages 1-4	<p>Clarification is added that the agency must establish the onset and termination of income in the process of verifying income.</p> <p>Clarification is added that agencies must not verify citizenship and expenses for the homeless shelter allowance unless the information is questionable.</p> <p>Information that the worker may need to establish the eligibility of immigrants is added.</p>
Pages 7-14	Pages 7-14	<p>The child support system is added as one of systems of record workers must screen for all applicants.</p> <p>A statement is added that agencies must be careful no to disclose information about an applying household in attempting to obtain information from a collateral contact.</p> <p>The list of required instances for workers to document case files is changes to eliminate document interview scheduling.</p>

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		<p>The list includes a requirement for workers to document that households have sufficient income to support the financial obligations if workers assign a certification period of three months or more.</p>
Part IV Entire Chapter	Part IV Entire Chapter	<p>The certification period for households whose expenses exceed the income because of the utility or telephone standard may be any length instead of the three-month limit. The length of the certification period is no longer tied to a household's history of making child support payments.</p> <p>The requirement to schedule a second interview is eliminated.</p> <p>The provision for lengthening certification periods are added. Information is also added to prohibit agencies from shortening certification periods.</p>
Part VII Pages 17-18	Part VII Pages 17-18	<p>Agencies must report illegal immigrants if there is a final Order of Deportation. In no other instance may agencies report to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.</p>
Appendix 1 Pages 3-4	Appendix 1 Pages 3-4	<p>The amount of money needed to earn a work credit is increased to \$830 per quarter.</p>
Part VIII Pages 11-12	Part VIII Pages 11-12	<p>A clarification is added that the voluntary quit and work reduction policies will not apply to persons who are exempted from work registration because of employment or other registration for TANF or General Relief purposes.</p>

Remove Page(s)	Insert Page(s)	Significant Changes
Part IX Pages 5-8	Part IX Pages 5-8	<p>Several aspects of the vehicle policy provision are changed. In Category 1, a vehicle does not have to be used primarily in an income producing venture to be fully exempt. In addition, a vehicle that would have a net return of \$1500 or less is exempt.</p> <p>In Category 2, each adult in the household is allowed one vehicle evaluated against the \$4,650 maximum. Households may also have a vehicle in Category 2 for persons under age 18 who use the vehicle to travel to and from school or work. There is no other evaluation of a vehicle's use allowed in Category 2.</p>
Pages 17-17a	Pages 17-17a	<p>The list of exempt resources is changed to allow the inclusion of vehicles in the resources that would produce an insignificant return if sold or through other disposition. Previously, vehicles were expressly prohibited from being included.</p>
Part X Pages 1-6	Part X Pages 1-6	<p>Condominium and association fees are allowable shelter costs. Households with an unoccupied home and an occupied home may use a single utility standard for both dwellings. Other clarifications are added regarding the utility standard.</p>
Part XI Pages 11-12	Part XI Pages 11-12	<p>An example showing the repayment of an overpayment is changed to allow counting the net amount of income after a repayment of an assistance check if the reason for the repayment was for a reason other than the client's failure to comply with the program's rules.</p>

Remove Page(s)	Insert Page(s)	Significant Changes
Pages 17-18	Pages 17-18	A example is added to the third party funds section to emphasize that money used on behalf of members with dual household membership will include instances in which the payee uses the money to pay household expenses.
Part XII Pages i-ii	Part XII Pages i-ii	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 7-14	Pages 7-14	Policies were deleted for sponsored immigrants who entered the U.S. before December 19, 1997. The calculation of the sponsor's and spouse's income is changed for immigrants who entered after December 19, 1997. The sponsor's income and resources must allow certain deductions before considering an amount as available to the immigrant household.
Part XIII Pages 3-4	Part XIII Pages 3-4	In evaluating a household's income, the EW must establish the beginning and ending of income sources.
Pages 7-8	Pages 7-8	Requirements for evaluating the medical expenses of households with 24-month certification periods are added. The household may elect to have a one-month deduction or have the expense averaged over the certification period balance.
Part XIV Page i	Part XIV Page i	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 3-15	Pages 3-16	The process of shortening certification periods is eliminated. The agency must follow a two-step process to request information and then send the advance notice to close the case if the household fails to respond.

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Appendix 1 Pages 1-2	Appendix 1 Pages 1-2	The chart for assessing household changes is revised to eliminate shortening the certification period and to include sending the Request for Verification form.
Part XIX Pages 7-8	Part XIX Pages 7-8	A household may orally withdraw an appeal request. The hearing officer must confirm the oral request within ten days and must reinstate the request if requested.
Part XXIV	Part XXIV	
Page i-ii	Page i-ii	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 1-18	Pages 1-18	The Application for Benefits is revised.
Pages 20-21	Pages 20-21	The Eligibility Review form is revised.
Pages 35-36	Pages 35-36	The hotline information form is revised.
Pages 38-39	Pages 38-39	The applicant rights form is revised.
Pages 50-51	Pages 50-51	The advance notice form is revised.
Pages 54-55	Pages 54-55	The instructions for the expiration notice are revised.
Pages 56-57	Pages 56-57	The change report is revised.
Pages 73-74	Pages 73-74	The nonreceipt and replacement authorization form is revised.
Pages 106-107	Pages 106-107	The instructions for the 24-month review form is revised.
Pages 115-118	Pages 115-118	The ADAPT request for assistance form is revised.

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Part XXV Pages 11-12	Part XXV Pages 11-12	Calculating the number of hours a participant must serve in the work experience component of the employment and training program must include months with prorated benefits and the current month.
Appendix III Page i	Appendix III Page i	The Table of Contents is revised.
Pages 6-7	Pages 6-7	The assessment form is revised.
Pages 10-11	Pages 10-11	The participation plan form is revised.
Pages 20-21	Pages 20-21	The worksite referral form is revised.
Pages 26-28	Pages 26-28	The statistical form and instructions are revised.
Pages 29-30	Pages 29-30	The contact sheet is revised.

This transmittal letter must be retained indefinitely.

Sonia Rivero
Commissioner

Attachment